

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-35. **(Canceled)**

36. **(Previously Presented)** Apparatus for facilitating sealing of a puncture formed in a proximal lateral surface of a vessel, the apparatus comprising:

a bar having proximal and distal ends and a first bore extending laterally therethrough;
and

a filament having a first free end and a second free end, the filament being slidably disposed through the first bore, the bar being slidable relative to the filament; and

a delivery sheath having proximal and distal ends, a lumen extending therebetween to contain the bar and filament, and a sharpened tip at the distal end.

37. **(Canceled)**

38. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising a push rod disposed in the lumen proximal of the bar.

39. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the bar has a shape chosen from the group consisting of cylindrical shapes, rectangular shapes, and oval shapes.

40. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the bar comprises a biodegradable material.

41. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising a tensioning device configured to hold the filament in a tensioned state such that the tensioning device provides an external compressive force upon the proximal lateral surface of the vessel during tensioning of the filament.

42. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 41, wherein the tensioning device comprises:

- an upright having upper and lower ends;
- a plurality of legs attached to the lower end; and
- a grip affixed to the upper end.

43. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the grip comprises a V-shaped groove formed in an elastomeric material.

44. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the first bore is disposed in a central region of the bar.

45. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising an eyelet coupled to the bar, wherein the filament is slidably disposed through the first bore and then the eyelet and then back through the first bore.

46. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the first bore is disposed in a central region of the bar, and the eyelet is coupled to a distal region of the bar.

47. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the eyelet is coupled to a central region of the bar, and the first bore is coupled to a distal region of the bar.

48. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising a second bore extending laterally through the bar, wherein the filament is slidably disposed through both the first bore and the second bore.

49. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the first bore is disposed in a central region of the bar, and the second bore is disposed in a distal region of the bar.

50. **(Currently Amended)** Apparatus for facilitating sealing of a puncture formed in a proximal lateral surface of a vessel, the apparatus comprising:

a bar having proximal and distal ends, a first bore extending laterally therethrough, and a first eyelet coupled to the bar; and

a filament having a first free end and a second free end, the filament being removably and slidably disposed through the first eyelet and the first bore, the bar being removable from and slidable relative to the filament.

51. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 50, wherein the first eyelet is coupled to a central region of the bar.

52. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 50, wherein the bar further comprises a second eyelet coupled to the bar, wherein the filament is slidably disposed through the first eyelet and then through the second eyelet and then back through the first eyelet.

53. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the first eyelet is coupled to a central region of the bar, and the second eyelet is coupled to a distal region of the bar.

54. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 50, further comprising a delivery sheath having proximal and distal ends, a lumen extending therebetween and a sharpened tip at the distal end, wherein the lumen is configured to contain the bar and filament.

55. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising a push rod disposed in the lumen of the delivery sheath proximal of the bar.

56. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 50, wherein the bar comprises a biodegradable material.

57. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 50, further comprising a tensioning device configured to hold the filament in a tensioned state so that the vessel is narrowed sufficiently to cause coagulation of blood near the puncture and such that the tensioning device provides an external compressive force upon the proximal lateral surface of the vessel during tensioning of the filament.

58-72 **(Canceled).**